

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of processing prescription requests comprising the steps:
 - establishing a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;
 - submitting a prescription request to the prescription processing system;
 - 5 preparing, by personnel capable of independently assessing correctness of the prescription request, a completed prescription form based on the submitted audible prescription request;
 - sending the completed prescription form to a filling pharmacy; and
 - filling the prescription request, at the filling pharmacy, based on the
 - 10 completed prescription form.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the prescription request is submitted in audible form.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the prescription request is submitted by facsimile.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the prescription request is submitted by electronic mail.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the prescription request is submitted in the form of data from a wireless/mobile device.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the prescription request is submitted in the form of data transmitted from a PDA.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps:

capturing the prescription request for subsequent manipulation; and
transcribing the captured prescription request.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of preparing is performed based, at least partially, on a content of the transcribed prescription request.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of capturing further includes the steps:

converting the captured prescription request to a digitized format to obtain a digitized prescription request; and

5 storing the digitized prescription request on a database maintained by the prescription processing system.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the digitized format is a digital data format.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the digitized format is a standard digital audio format.

12. The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps:

creating an identification file, including identification data, for the digitized prescription request; and

concatenating the identification file with the digitized prescription request
5 to form a prescription file.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of prompting a user to input information associated with the prescription.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of prompting comprises the steps:
requesting physician information;
requesting user information; and
requesting a member ID number.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of submitting includes a step of determining if the prescription request is to renew an existing prescription or to submit a new prescription.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the prescription request is to submit a new prescription, and further comprising the steps:
submitting member information;
submitting patient information; and
5 submitting medication information.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the member information includes the member's name and the member's address.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the prescription request is to renew a prescription and further comprising the steps:

determining if there is an existing prescription number for renewal; and

requesting the existing prescription number if it is available.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising the steps:

determining if there is a change in patient therapy that would affect one or more aspects of the prescription request; and

5 if there is no change in patient therapy, then performing the steps:

reviewing the submitted prescription request to obtain the user's approval, and

closing the prescription request.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the user does not approve the submitted prescription request based on the step of reviewing, and further comprising a step of canceling the prescription request.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein there is a change in therapy, and further comprising the steps:

requesting new medication information from the user; and

reviewing the new medication information.

22. The method of claim 18, wherein there is no prescription number for renewal, and further comprising the steps:

requesting member information;

requesting patient information; and

5 requesting medication information.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the member information requested about the member includes the member's name and the member's address.

24. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of closing the prescription request.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of closing comprises the steps:
determining if the user would like to submit a new prescription request;
repeating the steps of submitting, preparing, sending, and filling if the user would like to submit a new prescription request; and

5 terminating the connection if the user would not like to submit an new prescription request.

26. The method of claim 13, further comprising a step of verifying the prompted information input by the user.

27. The method of claim 26, further comprising the steps:
producing a form pre-populated with the verified information;
assigning the form a unique identifier which associates the form with the prescription request; and

5 submitting the form via facsimile.

28. The method of claim 14, further comprising the steps:
comparing the physician's phone number and the prescription number;
and

5 if the physician's phone number and the prescription number result in a predetermined relationship, then filling the prescription request using an automated entry agent.

29. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing includes a step of establishing the connection using a telephone.

30. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of connecting includes a step of establishing the connection over an electronic network using a personal computer.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the electronic network is a direct-connection network.

32. The method of claim 30, wherein the electronic network is a packet-switched network.

33. The method of claim 30, wherein:
the prescription request is an audible prescription request; and
the step of submitting includes a step of submitting the audible prescription request through a microphone coupled to the personal computer.

34. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of submitting a prescription request includes the steps:

submitting patient information; and
submitting medication information.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the submitted patient information includes a patient name, address, and date of birth.

36. The method of claim 34, wherein the submitted medication information includes medication name, strength, and dosage.

37. A method of processing prescription requests comprising the steps:

- 5 establishing a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;
- submitting a prescription request to the prescription processing system;
- capturing the prescription request for subsequent manipulation;
- processing the captured prescription request;
- preparing, by at least one of a pharmacist and personnel capable of
- 10 independently assessing correctness of the prescription request, a completed prescription form based, at least partially, on the processed prescription request;
- sending the completed prescription form to a predetermined pharmacy;
- and
- filling the prescription request, at the predetermined pharmacy, based on
- 15 the completed prescription form.

38. A method of processing prescription requests comprising the steps:
- establishing a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;
 - submitting a prescription request to the prescription processing system;
 - 5 capturing the prescription request;
 - converting the captured prescription request to a digitized format to obtain a digitized prescription request;
 - creating an identification file, including identification data, for the digitized prescription request;
 - 10 associating the identification file and the digitized prescription request to form a prescription file;
 - storing the prescription file on a database maintained by the prescription processing system;
 - transcribing the digitized prescription request;
 - 15 preparing, by at least one of a pharmacist and personnel capable of independently assessing correctness of the prescription request, a completed prescription form based, at least partially, on the transcribed prescription request;
 - sending the completed prescription form to a filling pharmacy; and
 - filling the prescription request, at the filling pharmacy, based at least
 - 20 partially on the completed prescription form.

39. A method of processing prescription requests comprising the steps:

establishing a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;

submitting a prescription request to the prescription processing system;

5 capturing the prescription request;

transcribing the captured prescription request;

preparing, by at least one of a pharmacist and personnel capable of independently assessing correctness of the prescription request, a completed prescription form based, at least partially, on the transcribed prescription request;

10 sending the completed prescription form to a pharmacy;

filling the prescription request, at the pharmacy, based on the completed prescription form;

determining if the user would like to submit a new prescription request;

repeating the steps of submitting, capturing, transcribing, preparing,

15 sending, filling, and determining if the user would like to submit a new prescription request; and

terminating the connection if the user would not like to submit a new prescription request.

40. A method of processing prescription requests comprising the steps:
- establishing a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;
 - submitting a prescription request to the prescription processing system,
 - 5 wherein the audible prescription request includes user information and a member ID number;
 - capturing the prescription request;
 - converting the captured prescription request to a digitized format to obtain a digitized prescription request;
 - 10 creating an identification file, including identification data, for the digitized prescription request;
 - associating the identification file with the digitized prescription request to form a prescription file;
 - storing the prescription file on a database maintained by the prescription
 - 15 processing system;
 - transcribing the digitized prescription request;
 - preparing, by at least one of a pharmacist and personnel capable of independently assessing correctness of the prescription request, a completed prescription form based, in part, on the transcribed digitized prescription request;
 - 20 sending the completed prescription form to a central pharmacy; and
 - filling the prescription request, at the central pharmacy, based at least partially on the completed prescription form.

41. A method of submitting a prescription request for retrieval of a filled prescription by a patient, the method comprising the steps:

initiating a connection to a remotely located prescription processing system;

5 submitting an audible prescription request to the prescription processing system; and

retrieving, by the patient, a filled prescription from a predetermined filling pharmacy remotely located from the prescription processing system.

42. A method of processing a submitted prescription request, comprising the steps:

receiving a request from a remote source to establish a connection with a local prescription processing system;

5 establishing a connection with the remote source;

receiving an audible prescription request;

preparing, by a pharmacist, a completed prescription form based, at least partially, on the audible prescription request; and

sending the completed prescription form to a pharmacy to be filled.

43. A prescription processing network comprising:

a prescription processing system;

a communication device for establishing a communication channel with
said prescription processing system and submitting a prescription request over said

5 communication channel, said communication device being remotely located from said
prescription processing system;

said prescription processing system being accessible by one of a
pharmacist and personnel capable of independently assessing correctness of the
prescription request for preparing a completed prescription form based, at least in part, on

10 the submitted prescription request; and

a pharmacy for receiving said completed prescription form, and filling
said prescription request based on the completed prescription form.

44. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said
communication device includes circuitry for submitting said prescription request
electronically.

45. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said
communication device includes circuitry for submitting said prescription request in an
audible format.

46. The prescription processing network of claim 43 wherein said prescription
processing system includes a header entry agent for retrieving predetermined information
from said submitted prescription request and transcribing said predetermined information.

47. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said communication channel is established over a private network.

48. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said communication channel is established over a public network.

49. The prescription processing network of claim 48, wherein said public network is the Internet.

50. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said communication device is a computer.

51. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said communication device is a telephone.

52. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said communication device is a facsimile device.

53. The prescription processing network of claim 43, wherein said pharmacist and said pharmacy are remotely located from each other, and remotely located from both said prescription processing system and said communication device.